
Fallopia multiflora var. *angulata*, a New Combination in the Polygonaceae from China

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ABSTRACT. Taxonomic evaluation of *Polygonum multiflorum* Thunb. var. *angulatum* S. Y. Liu (Polygonaceae) reveals that a new combination in *Fallopia* Adans. is necessary, and the name *F. multiflora* (Thunb.) Haraldson var. *angulata* (S. Y. Liu) H. J. Yan, Z. J. Fang & Shi Xiao Yu is proposed. The new variety differs from the typical one by its square branchlets with longitudinal ridges that are densely papillate and by its root tubers with a greater abundance of fibers and abnormal vascular strands evident in anatomical cross section.

Key words: China, *Fallopia*, Guangxi, Polygonaceae.

In *The Polygoneae of Eastern Asia*, Steward (1930) divided the family into three genera (*Antenoron* Raf., *Polygonum* L., and *Koenigia* L.), and *P. multiflorum* Thunb. was placed in *Polygonum* sect. *Tiniaria* Meisn. Liu (1959) later moved *P. multiflorum* along with *P. ciliinerve* (Nakai) Ohwi from section *Tiniaria* to section *Pleuropterus* (Turcz.) Haraldson within the genus. Based on its stems with a twining habit, *Fallopia* Adans. was later recognized as an independent genus (Haraldson, 1978), and *P. multiflorum* was transferred to the genus *Fallopia*, a taxonomic opinion that was subsequently recognized by Li (1998; Li et al., 2003) in the *Flora Reipublicae Popularis Sinicae*. *Fallopia multiflora* (Thunb.) Haraldson is a well-known herbal medicine in China, and its roots are called He Shou Wu in Chinese. This species has often been used as a tonic and an anti-aging herb in Chinese traditional medicine. Liu (1991) described *P. multiflorum* var. *angulatum* S. Y. Liu from Guangxi. This variety differs from the typical variety in its square branchlets with longitudinal ridges that are densely covered by papillate bodies; the immature leaf that is purple adaxially along the vein and abaxially, turning green at maturity; the larger flower (3–3.5 mm diam. at anthesis vs. 2–3 mm diam. in variety *multiflorum*); and the elliptic tepals that are unequal in size, with

the outer three larger and winged on the abaxial surface, and the apex of the wings retuse (vs. apex entire in variety *multiflorum*). However, *P. multiflorum* var. *angulatum* was considered only a cultivated variant of *F. multiflora* in the *Flora of China* treatment of the Polygonaceae (Li, 1998).

We examined the bioactive components of *Polygonum multiflorum* Thunb. [\equiv *Fallopia multiflora* (Thunb.) Haraldson var. *multiflora*] collected from seven provinces in China and compared these to two accessions of *P. multiflorum* var. *angulatum* from Tianyang County, Guangxi (Table 1). The bioactive components of variety *angulatum* differed remarkably from those of the typical variety (Fu et al., 2006; Yan et al., 2007). Our further investigation of their respective anatomies, morphologies, and ITS sequence data (Yan, unpublished data) supports *P. multiflorum* var. *angulatum* as distinct and its transfer to *Fallopia* is proposed here at the varietal level.

1. *Fallopia multiflora* (Thunb.) Haraldson, Symb. Bot. Upsal. 22(2): 77. 1978. Basionym: *Polygonum multiflorum* Thunb., Syst. Veg. (ed. 14) 379. 1784. TYPE: China. Yunnan: *Ducloux 485* (holotype, BS [fide Steward, 1930] not seen).

1a. *Fallopia multiflora* var. *multiflora*.

1b. *Fallopia multiflora* var. *angulata* (S. Y. Liu) H. J. Yan, Z. J. Fang & Shi Xiao Yu, comb. nov. Basionym: *Polygonum multiflorum* Thunb. var. *angulatum* S. Y. Liu, Acta Bot. Yunnan. 13(4): 390. 1991. TYPE: China. Guangxi: Lingyun, 23 Oct. 1989, S. Y. Liu L89015 (holotype, KUN).

1c. *Fallopia multiflora* var. *ciliinervis* (Nakai) Yonekura & H. Ohashi, J. Jap. Bot. 72(3): 158. 1997. Basionym: *Pleuropterus ciliinervis* Nakai, Repert. Spec. Nov. Regni Veg. 13(363–367): 267–268. 1914. *Fallopia multiflora* var. *ciliinerve* (Nakai) A. J. Li, Fl. Reipubl. Popularis

Table 1. Voucher collections from China for *Fallopia multiflora*. Vouchers are deposited at GDMP.

Taxon	Voucher	Locality
<i>Fallopia multiflora</i>	<i>H. J. Yan Y05JL</i>	Guangdong, Deqing
	<i>H. J. Yan Y05JG</i>	Guangdong, Deqing
	<i>H. J. Yan Y05SB</i>	Guizhou, Shibing
	<i>H. J. Yan Y05EMS</i>	Sichuan, Mt. Emei
	<i>H. J. Yan Y05JY</i>	Henan, Jiyuan
	<i>H. J. Yan Y05ES</i>	Hubei, Enshi
	<i>H. J. Yan Y05JGS</i>	Jiangxi, Mt. Jinggang
	<i>H. J. Yan Y05JX</i>	Guangxi, Jingxi
	<i>H. J. Yan Y05GZ</i>	Guangdong, Guangzhou
<i>Fallopia multiflora</i> var. <i>angulata</i>	<i>S. Y. Liu Y05TY</i>	Guangxi, Tianyang
<i>Polygonum multiflora</i> var. <i>angulata</i>	<i>S. Y. Liu L89015</i> (KUN)	Guangxi, Tianyang

Sin. 25(1): 103. 1998, nom. illeg. superfl.
TYPE: China. Liaoning: thickets in valleys,
mtn. slopes, 13 July 1897, *V. Komarov 563*
(holotype, GH).

Id. *Fallopia multiflora* var. *hypoleuca* (Nakai ex
Ohwi) Yonek. & H. Ohashi, *J. Jap. Bot.* 72(3):
158. 1997. Basionym: *Polygonum hypoleucum*
Nakai ex Ohwi, *Acta Phytotax. Geobot.* 7(3):
130. 1938. TYPE: Taiwan. Taipei: Hokuto, 1
Dec. 1913, *Urbain Faurie 762* (isotype, HAST).

To distinguish the varieties of *Fallopia multiflora*
in China, a revised identification key is provided
(based on Li et al., 2003).

A REVISED KEY TO *FALLOPIA MULTIFLORA* IN CHINA

- 1a. Branchlets square in cross section variety *angulata*
- 1b. Branchlets circular.
 - 2a. Leaf blades abaxially glabrous.
 - 3a. Bracts triangular to ovate
..... variety *multiflora*
 - 3b. Bracts oblique, funnelform
..... variety *hypoleuca*
 - 2b. Leaf blade abaxially papillate along veins,
but otherwise glabrate variety *ciliinervis*

METHODOLOGY

Anatomy. Both handmade cross sections and
microtome sections were made from root tubers at 1
cm diam. Transverse sections 8–12 µm thick were
serially cut, and then dehydrated through an ethanol
series. The sections were stained with safranin-fast
green FCF, mounted on microscope slides, and
embedded in Paraplast Plus medium (Zhengzhou
Baisite Test Instruments Sales Co., Zhengzhou, China).

Stem cuticle ultrastructure. Stems were sampled
from the approximate middle fourth to fifth internodes
and cut into small tissue blocks, which were fixed in
2.5% glutaraldehyde at 4°C for 6 hours, then rinsed
with 0.1 M phosphate buffer (pH 7.2) six times, and

dehydrated through an ethanol series toward supercrit-
ical point drying. Stem samples were sputter-coated
with gold and examined with a Hitachi S-520 scanning
electron microscope (Hitachi Ltd., Tokyo, Japan).

RESULTS

Stem morphology. Epidermal cells were rectan-
gular, with their long axes parallel to the stem axis in
Fallopia multiflora and *F. multiflora* var. *angulata*.
Epidermal cuticles were striated in *F. multiflora* and
F. multiflora var. *angulata*, and there were no
obvious morphological differences in the ornamenta-
tion. Only in *F. multiflora* var. *angulata* was a
twisting of the epidermal cells noted, with papillate
ridges evident (Fig. 1A, B).

Root tuber anatomy. Transverse sections were
similar among the samples for *Fallopia multiflora*
with several layers of cork cells noted, filled with
brown contents. The tuber cortex in *F. multiflora*,
scattered with four to 11 abnormal vascular bundles
in *F. multiflora* with fewer vessels evident, was
broader than the cork. The vascular cylinder in *F.*
multiflora, in the central portion of the root, has a
ring-shaped cambium, with fewer vessels in the
xylem and a few wood fibers noted to surround the
vessels (Fig. 1C, D).

Cellular ultrastructure of *Fallopia multiflora* var.
angulata differed in that the vascular bundle fibers
occurred in the outer part of the cortex, and many
more abnormal vascular bundles appeared to be
scattered in the cortex. Also, pericycle fibers were
grouped in bundles in *F. multiflora* var. *angulata*,
with wood fibers surrounding the vessels (Fig. 1E, F).

DISCUSSION

Based on our field observations and an earlier
study (Liu, 1991), significant morphological differ-

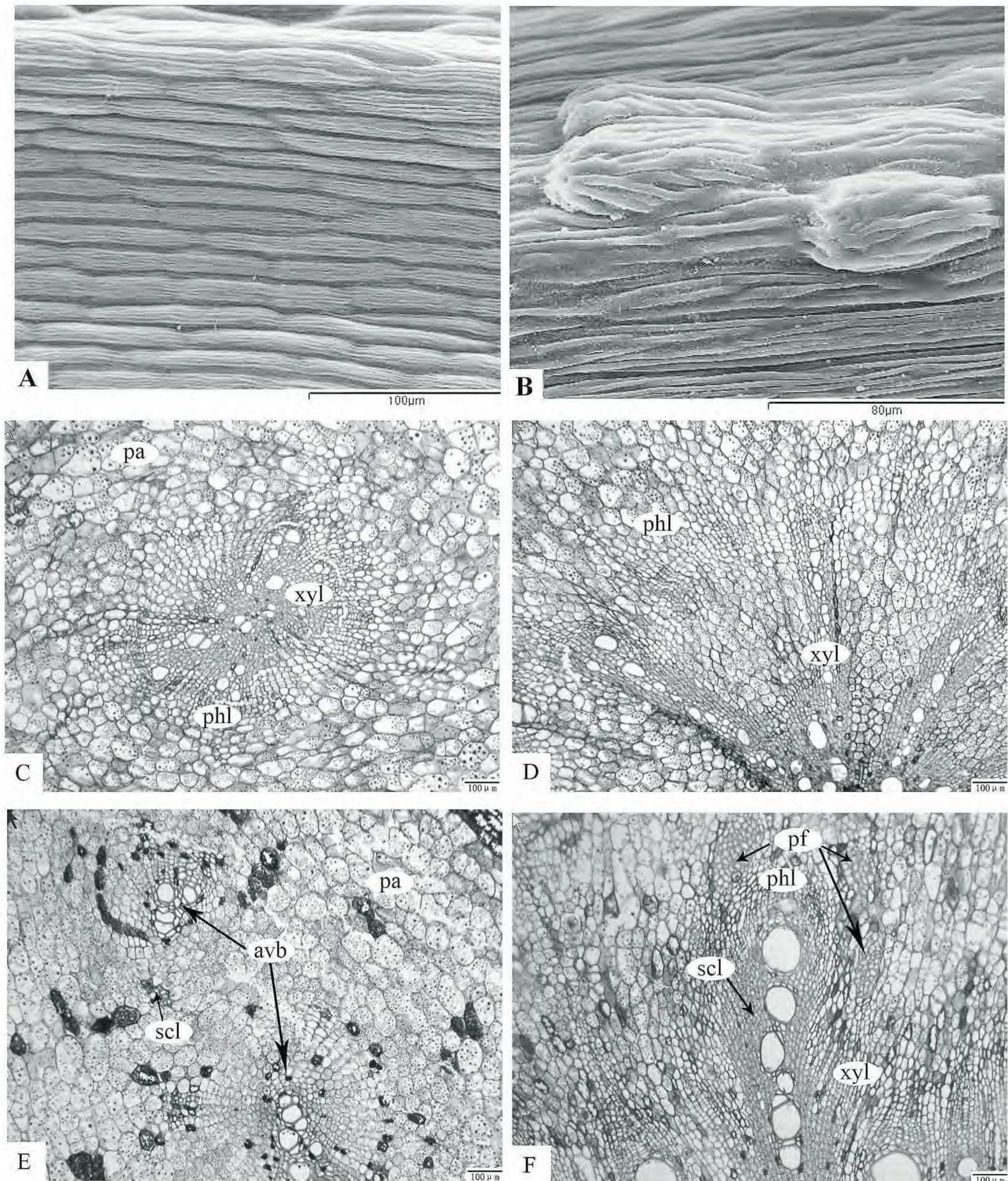


Figure 1. A, B. SEM micrographs of plant stems showing cuticular ornamentation. —A. *Fallopia multiflora* (Thunb.) Haraldson, H. J. Yan Y05JG sample from Deqing, Guangdong. —B. *Fallopia multiflora* var. *angulata* (S. Y. Liu) H. J. Yan, Z. J. Fang & Shi Xiao Yu, S. Y. Liu Y05TY from Tiangyang, Guangxi. C–F. Light micrographs of root tuber transverse sections. C, D. *Fallopia multiflora* (Thunb.) Haraldson, H. J. Yan Y05JG sample from Deqing, Guangdong. —C. Cortex showing abnormal vascular bundles. —D. Normal vascular tissue. E, F. *Fallopia multiflora* var. *angulata* (S. Y. Liu) H. J. Yan, Z. J. Fang & Shi Xiao Yu, S. Y. Liu Y05TY from Tiangyang, Guangxi. —E. Cortex showing abnormal vascular bundles. —F. Normal vascular tissue. Abbreviations: avb, abnormal vascular bundles; pa, parenchyma; pf, pericycle fibers; phl, phloem; scl, sclerenchymatous fibers; xyl, xylem.

ences exist between *Fallopia multiflora* var. *angulata* and the typical variety of *F. multiflora*. The former has many more cortical fibers in the root tubers, including pericycle fibers and wood fibers, as well as

abnormal vascular strands evident in transverse sections. These characters have remained stable even when the cultivated samples were transplanted for more than 10 years (these are maintained at Guangxi

Traditional Chinese Medical University and Guangdong Pharmaceutical University).

Crude extracts from the roots of *Fallopia multiflora* contain phospholipids, anthraquinones, and bianthraquinonyl glucosides, and these compounds exhibit prominent effects on many clinical therapies, particularly in cardiovascular diseases (Chang, 2000; Chan et al., 2002). We have examined the nature and concentration of 2,3,5,4'-tetrahydroxystilbene-2-O- β -D-glucoside and anthraquinones by high-performance liquid chromatography (Fu et al., 2006; Yan et al., 2007). The content of 2,3,5,4'-tetrahydroxystilbene-2-O- β -D-glucoside from samples of variety *angulatum* collected from Tianyang were only 0.0688%, much lower than 1% (a minimal effective level established by the China Pharmacopoeia Committee [2005]). The content of emodin physcion from these samples was also very low, with very little chrysophanol and rhein detected. The levels of these compounds from *F. multiflora* var. *angulata* were significantly lower than those sampled from *F. multiflora*.

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